

MESSAGE
OF
QUAKERISM

CHARLES M. WOODMAN

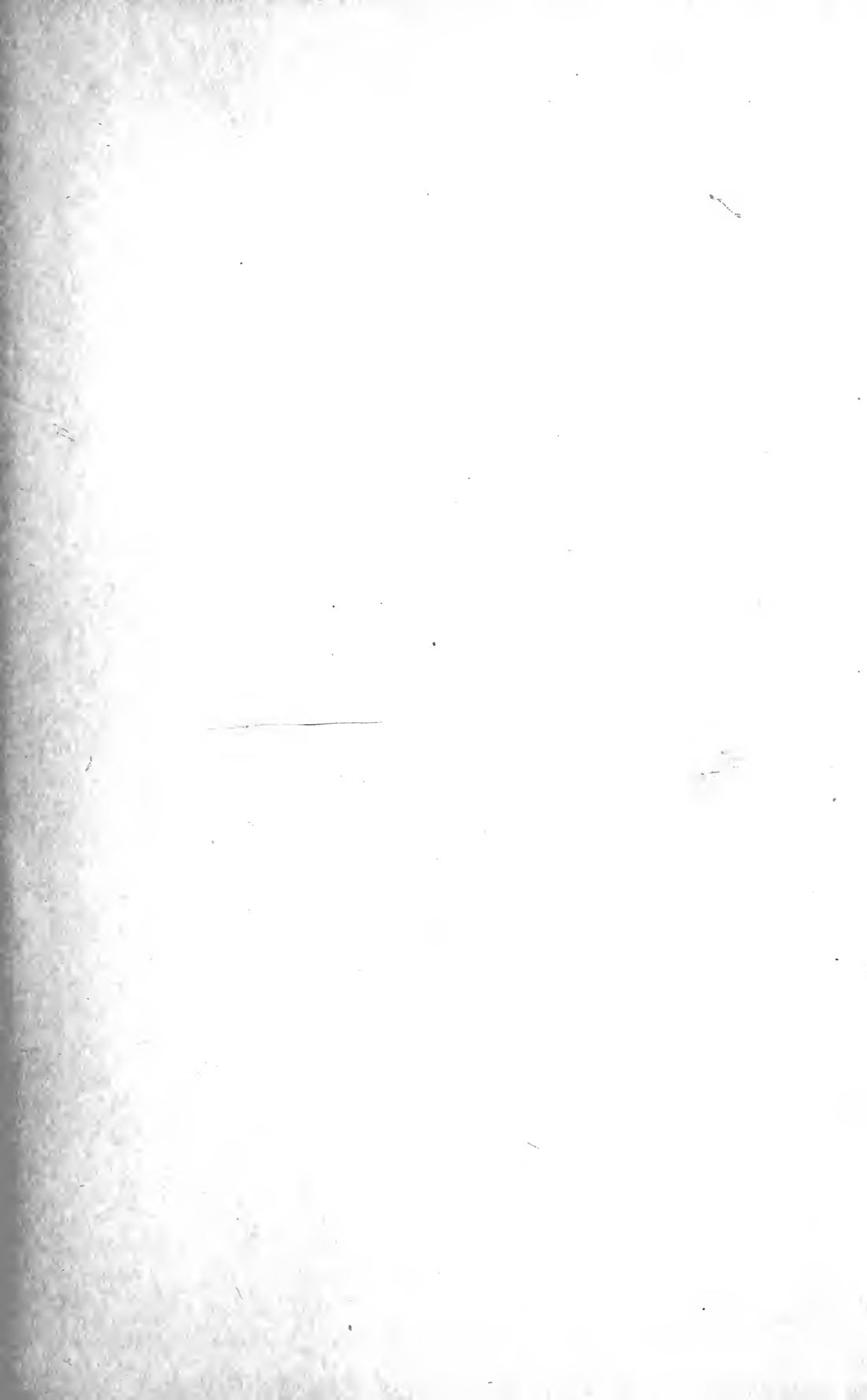


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**THE PRESENT DAY MESSAGE
OF QUAKERISM**

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Present Day Message
of
Quakerism

BY
CHARLES M. WOODMAN



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THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED
TO THE MEMBERS
OF THE

FRIENDS MEETING IN PORTLAND, MAINE

WHO IN CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY, IN SPIRITUAL FELLOWSHIP
AND IN LIVING WHICH EXEMPLIFIES THE TRUTHS
HEREIN SET FORTH, HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE
INSPIRATION, AND AFFORDED THE CONSISTENT
BACKGROUND FOR THESE MESSAGES.

FOREWORD

THE chapters of this little book are the outgrowth of messages given to the congregation, which, week by week, assembles for worship in the Friends Church in Portland, Maine. They were given in the first place under the inspiration of a felt need for knowledge in the fundamentals of Quakerism. They represent a very real concern to set forth at not too great length, and yet clearly and forcibly the essential features of that faith and practice, which for more than two centuries have characterized the Society of Friends. They make no claim to originality, but have sought to gather up and present in a fresh way truths which have been for generations part of the spiritual equipment of Friends everywhere. It is the hope of the author that for Young

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Friends, and for those looking for a modern statement of the Quaker position, this book will fill a place at present not overcrowded.

The book goes to its larger audience, as the messages went to their first hearers, with the prayer that it may shed light on the path to truth, and help to a deeper appreciation of the way in which the Heavenly Father would more intimately share all the life of his children.

PORTLAND, MAINE.

March, 1915.

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I

**THE BASIS OF THE QUAKER
FAITH**

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness apprehended it not.

"There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came that he might bear witness of the light. There was the true light, even the light which lighteth every man, coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth."

Gospel According to John.

"The vital principle of the Christian faith is the truth that man's salvation and higher life are personal matters between the individual soul and God."

Discipline.

I

THE BASIS OF THE QUAKER FAITH

THE Society of Friends originated in England in the middle of the Seventeenth Century as a protest against English Protestantism. When England broke away from the Church of Rome she shattered the fetters of her religious slavery so close to the papal throne that she unfortunately dragged after her practically all the chains of sacerdotalism, ceremonialism and ritualism which had characterized her relations with the Roman Church. The king of England seized these dangling fetters, fastened them to his own person, and established an authority in religion no less rigorous than that formerly held by the pope. The independent churches in their turn rose in protest, and when they came into political power they established a religious authority

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as rigorous and intolerant as any that had preceded it. Personal religion sank to the levels of slavish adherence to the prescribed forms and ceremonies of a ritualistic Church service. It was content with intellectual assent to dogma, with little or no effort to make the moral life rise to the Christlike standard. It took its religious nourishment in predigested doses from ecclesiastical spoons, held in many instances by those whose lives were glaring refutations of the truths they administered.

Against such a travesty of Christianity the message of Quakerism arose as a firm, persistent and irresistible protest. Its founder, George Fox, in his search for peace of mind and heart made trial of all that the established and independent churches had to offer in the way of ministerial advice, forms, ceremonies, rituals and dogmas. They were to him but the vestments of religion, the shell from which the meat had been extracted, wells to which he came with a thirsty soul and found no water. He tells us that in his

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despair of finding help from any outward source he finally discovered within himself a power which directed him to the foundation of all life, Jesus Christ. He speaks of it in the first instance, as a "Voice," and later refers to it as the "Light," the "Seed," the "Principle" of God within man, the "Christ within." (cf. "Journal of George Fox." Jones. Introd. p. 29.) In yielding to "that of God" within him he found great joy. The shadows disappeared and he walked in the light of a new life. He had found immediate and personal relations with God without the help of any of the so-called religious agencies of his time.

He had discovered as an experience in his own life that man can have direct access to the very heart of God. For him this was the beginning and essence of all true personal religion, and if yielded to led straight on to the power and victory of a Christ-filled life. On this he based his message. He found to his surprise that the Scriptures

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were full of teachings substantiating this truth. He discovered in the pages of history abundant illustrations. He preached what he had experienced, and so eager were the people of his day for this vital principle of religion that they flocked to the standard he raised like doves to the windows. With this positive declaration of vital Christianity, that every man may have intimate and direct personal relations with God through Jesus Christ, he protested against the sounding brass professions, and the clanging cymbal ceremonialism of his day; and before he departed this world for his eternal reward he left in Great Britain and Ireland fifty thousand followers, who in the face of the bitterest persecution were constantly bearing witness to the virility of this great truth.

This in substance is the situation which called the Society of Friends into existence. Quakerism arose as a protest against a Protestantism which in its formalism had submerged the vital principle that the Chris-

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tian religion is fundamentally a matter of personal and immediate fellowship between the individual soul and God. On this truth the Quakerism of the Seventeenth Century based its message. On this truth Quakerism has woven the fabric of its life for more than two centuries. On this truth Quakerism stands today endeavoring to show the practical value of its message in rigid application to all phases of man's religious, moral and social life.

The Scriptural warrant for this position is rich and varied, unfolding itself alike in Old and New Testaments, and pictured in character, psalm, prophecy and teaching. No better statement of this fundamental truth can be found than that given in John 1:1-14. This passage is chosen because it contains the verse which has often been called the Quaker text: "There was the true light, even the light which lighteth every man, coming into the world." It is also worthy of note because it so clearly admits even in a New Testament setting

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the possibility of personal recognition of God without the knowledge of the historical Christ entering as a factor into the problem. This makes personal relations with God a universal potentiality.

The passage is an effort in terms of the "Word" and the "Light" to show the activity of what we may call the "Eternal Christ" in the cosmos and in human experience before his incarnation, as recorded in the 14th verse—"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us." The writer would call attention to his oneness with God, (vs. 1, 2) to his creative activity, (v. 3) to his life as the light of men, shining for every man, (vs. 4, 9) to his being unapprehended, unrecognized and unreceived, even by his own, (vs. 5, 10, 11) and also to the fact that wherever men yielded themselves to his influence they became in a real spiritual sense the children of God. (vs. 12, 13.) The sequence implied in verse 14, "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us," locates this revelation and sal-

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vation previous to the physical appearance of Christ in the incarnation.

The whole passage links the manifestations of God to man in the old dispensation to the fuller manifestations of God in the new dispensation. In Quaker phrase it describes the workings of the "Inner Light," the "Seed," the "Principle of God within" every man. This is but another way of describing the inspiration which came to the psalmists, and the divine voice which spoke to the prophets. This Light that lighteth every man (v. 9) was the voice that said to Abram, "Get thee out of thy country;" (Gen. 12: 1) it was the strength which sustained Job in his great trial, and enabled him to say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." (Job 19: 25.) It was the inspiration which came to the young prophet, when, bowing before the seraphim, he felt his lips touched with the live coal from off the altar, and heard the words, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (Isa. 6: 8.) It was this which in New Testament times

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brought to Cornelius the consciousness that Peter's words were true when he said, "In every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him." (Acts 10: 35.)

Scriptural terminology differs in defining the method of this divine and human communication, and theologians for centuries have quarreled over what inspiration is, but, when the dust of these differences has settled, the truth stands out even clearer than before in both Scriptural and theological perspective, that in all ages and races God has seen fit to reveal himself directly, immediately and personally to man. The differences are ripples on the surface caused by men's theological bias, intellectual training and temperament; the agreement on the fundamental fact of immediate revelation is the movement of the mighty current which has been ceaselessly flowing through human life from the hour that Adam "Heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day," to that

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personal experience with the Divine Spirit
in the life of the poet when he said,—

“And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
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A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.”

This basis of the Quaker faith, thus exemplified in the origin of the Society of Friends as a protest against religious abuses and shallowness, and thus traced in the teaching and experience of the Scripture, is gathered up by Robert Barclay (Apolo-
gy Props. V. & VI.) and put in a three-
fold statement—“First, that God . . . hath
given to every man, . . . a certain day or
time of visitation. . . . Secondly, that for
this end God hath communicated and given
unto every man a measure of the light of
his own Son, a measure of grace, or a meas-
ure of the Spirit, which the Scripture ex-
presses by several names. . . . Thirdly, that
God, in and by this Light and Seed, invites,

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calls, exhorts and strives with every man, in order to save him; which, as it is received and not resisted, works the salvation of all, even of those who are ignorant of the death and sufferings of Christ, and of Adam's fall."

In making the basis of his faith within his own soul, the Friend consistently extols, reveres, and worships the God-man Christ Jesus, who in his incarnation, his sacrifice, his resurrection and his teachings is the outward expression on the plains of history of this spiritual and inward experience within the caverns of every man's life, where the Divine Spirit, in the voice of gentle stillness, would have direct dealings with the human soul.

The Christ of the manger, the cross and the empty tomb is the great beacon, sending his light down through the centuries and out to all the darkened places of humanity's life, to aid men everywhere to follow the light within their own souls. In fact, so essential is the life and work of the Christ

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of history that were there no story of his life as given in the four Gospels, were there no data of what he did and said, men who had yielded themselves to the inward call would by imagination, poetry, idealism or dream, posit some figure in the annals of humanity's life, which would embrace within itself the essential characteristics of One, whom we know lived and died and rose again, Jesus of Nazareth. Perchance this is why in the lore and legend of many ancient peoples we find the mythical stories of how their gods came down to walk and live with men. On the other hand, did we possess simply the historical Christ, he would at best remain a distant figure, and his power would be limited to lofty moral and spiritual teaching and noble example. He would be stripped of that point of contact with man, by means of which he now erects in every life yielding to his call a cross which is the complement of the Calvary of nineteen hundred years ago. Because of this immediate divine access, this inner

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touch of God with man, we have not a salvation in name and theory, a theological dogma, but a salvation through the Cross of Christ wrought out in Christlike character.

To look afield for corroborative witness of this basis of faith is to find a testimony well-nigh universal. Missionaries returning from the depths of China, Africa and India tell of finding in those dark spots of the earth, characters which can be described in no other way than with the attributes of the Christlike life. These souls have responded to the story of the Gospel with an avidity which has been almost startling to those who knew that the name of Jesus of Nazareth had never been spoken in their midst.

When the Greek philosopher Socrates, who wears a character and a soul like a Christian saint, in speaking of the Deity says, "I move not without thy knowledge," and the Roman Seneca can say, "There is a holy spirit in us that treateth us as we treat him," something other than mere men-

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tality must account for these and other blossoms of spiritual fragrance which spring out of ancient pagan mire. All the great leaders of modern philosophy build their structures on the immediate testimony of self-consciousness, and in so doing parallel from the angle of intellect, the building of thought and practice which the early Friends raised on the truth of immediate and direct access to God. However men may differ in their philosophic interpretations of the material universe, it is interesting to note how they are surely feeling their way down to a spiritual basis for their reasoning, and thus founding their systems on that which lies beneath what can be seen with the eye, or handled with the hand. In seeking this bedrock they are close to the depths where none other than the voice of God speaks to the soul of man.

Bergson exploits intuition and provokes the inference that if intuitions are valid we have reached the truth of things before the reason has time to get started. The "open-

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ings" of the early Friends, as recorded in their journals and letters, touch a chord which strikingly harmonizes with this modern teaching. The follower of George Fox, or the disciple of Bergson, might well be responsible for the sentiment expressed in "The Quaker of the Olden Time,"

"The presence of the wrong or right
He rather felt than saw."

The witness of a man's own inner experience is sufficient guarantee of the reality of this basis of faith, but when the philosopher, Rudolf Eucken, who has made a life study of psychological and spiritual problems, confirms the personal testimony, the man who lives with his spirit breathing the deadening atmosphere of the modern materialistic world has good reason to hold his head high and take his light from under the bushel. Eucken believes that from time to time in the course of history, spiritual impulses arise which are fundamentally different from physical self-preservation. "They force human activity into particular channels;

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they speak to us with a tone of command and require absolute obedience." He believes that the spiritual life is not the product of a gradual development from the life of nature, but has an independent origin and evolves new powers and standards. The spiritual life is a universal life, which transcends man, is shared by him, and raises him to itself. Change the manner of statement here, and substitute the name of George Fox, or Robert Barclay for Rudolf Eucken, and it would not strain the imagination much to find oneself following some early Quaker exposition of the doctrine of the Inner Light in its power to lift and transform all who yield themselves to its leading.

The student at his desk searching for truth, the man in the gutter lifted to his feet by a power beyond him, the youth lured on by the inspiration of an ideal, the child yielding to higher things in home and Church, all alike unite in bearing witness to the reality of this personal experience which finds voice in the universal testimony,

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that the vital principle of the Christian faith is the truth that man's salvation and higher life are personal matters between the individual soul and God.

"The Quaker religion which he (George Fox) founded is something which it is impossible to overpraise. In a day of shams, it was a religion of veracity rooted in spiritual inwardness, and a return to something more like the original gospel truth than men had ever known in England. So far as our Christian sects today are evolving into liberality, they are simply reverting in essence to the position which Fox and the early Quakers so long ago assumed." ("Varieties of Religious Experience." James. p. 6.) There can be no monopoly of such a truth as this. The Friends proclaimed it when it was obscured and hidden. They were as rescuers bearing a cup of water from the mountain spring to parched and thirsty lips. To attempt to corner the market of this truth were as foolish as to build a fence around an acre of the Atlantic Ocean, and

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thus claim to have a mortgage on the mighty deep. The basis of faith is as broad as humanity, and as free as the air we breathe. It is for all men everywhere.

The history of the Society of Friends does not occupy a large place in the story of nineteen Christian centuries, but its heroic effort to demonstrate the practical value of this basis of faith (direct personal relations with God) has given it an influence out of all proportion to its size. Quakerism is unique, not in its fundamental belief, but in the methods it has chosen to logically and thoroughly apply its faith to every phase of religious and social life.

Arguments based upon the Scripture have been written in favor of and against the Friend's position in eliminating from his religious practice not only the five sacraments exclusively Roman Catholic, but also the two sacraments used by most Protestant churches, Water Baptism and the Lord's Supper. He quarrels not with those who are really blessed in their use, even

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though every fresh light thrown on the Bible is confirming the Quaker's spiritual interpretation of these outward forms. But, seeing them in historical perspective, he notes their Old Testament and Jewish ceremonial origin; he sees them carried over into the new era with many other things like the use of meats, unleaven bread and washings of many kinds; he observes how these materialistic forms have been substituted time and again for an inward and personal spiritual experience; he notes how like baby clothes of a First Century faith they still cling to a Christianity that in centuries is nearing its majority. With his feet established on the fundamental of the soul's access to the Spirit of God, these appear as material crutches with which souls limp into the presence of God, when it is his intent that we should be healthy souls growing up unto a full grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

The Friend finds nothing in Scripture to contradict this position. On the contrary

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he finds much to support it. John the Baptist's statement, in speaking to the people about Jesus, "I baptized you in water; but he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit," (Mark 1: 8) and the Apostle Paul's two references to the work of Christ as having done away with ordinances, (Eph. 2: 15, Col. 2: 14) lead one naturally to infer that ordinances as such have no place in the Christian dispensation, unless there is some definite instruction to the contrary. This instruction we do not find in the New Testament. Jesus complied with the water baptism of John as he conformed to other Jewish ceremonies. In fact water baptism whenever referred to in the New Testament is always a part of the Jewish ceremonialism, linked with or carried over into early Christian practice. Jesus held water baptism so lightly that it is recorded, that he "Himself baptized not." (John 4: 2.) He used only the baptism with the Holy Spirit, and sought to lead his disciples down into the life of the Spirit. He referred to his

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baptism in words that can have none other than a spiritual meaning: "I have a baptism to be baptized with," (Luke 12: 50) he said, and he asked his followers if they could be baptized with his baptism. (Mark 10: 38.) All his commands were spiritual in their nature. When therefore he sent his apostles to disciple all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, (Matt 28: 19) the logic of his life, his baptism, and his teachings, leads to the conclusion that he has in mind here only a spiritual process. The Great Commission was evidently interpreted in this spiritual way in the Apostolic Age, else the Apostle Paul would not have been so emphatic in saying (referring to water baptism), "I thank God that I baptized none of you . . . ," and "Christ sent me not to baptize." (I Cor. 1: 14, 17.) For him baptism was a burial into Christ's death, and a resurrection into newness of life in him; (Rom. 6: 3-5) it was a putting on of Christ. (Gal. 3: 27.) For the Apostle

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Peter the term baptism distinctly does not refer to the use of water, but to the interrogation of a good conscience before God. (I Peter 3:21.)

In the same way the Friend finds no Scriptural warrant for the establishment of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Jesus ate the paschal meal with his disciples, and, in the way in which he so often gave spiritual significance to even the common things, he interpreted that Passover Supper in terms of his death. He was to die, but they, even because of that death, were to be fed and sustained by him in their spiritual life. As often, therefore, as they ate the passover meal, or even broke bread around the family table, or shared their fellowship in the early Christian Love Feast, they should always remember the deeper significance which he gave to the bread and the cup. Link this spiritual emphasis regarding these two things with the whole spiritual atmosphere of Jesus' teaching, catch the spirit of his method which sought gradually to wean

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them from the strict ceremonialism of the Jewish religion, and see the whole through eyes unfogged by any and all later ecclesiastical interpretations of these things in Jesus' life, and there appears no obligation whatever for the practice of any ordinance in the Christian Church.

If the paternal and filial relation is the figure best describing the fellowship which God holds with man, and this was the supreme revelation of Jesus, then the question is pertinent as to what possible place the form and ceremony can consistently hold as a part of the disciple's expression of his religious life. The little child performs no ceremony when, in need of comfort or strength, it seeks refuge in its father's arms. The little child goes through no form when the love of its heart leads it to fondly twine its arms around the father's neck and lay its face upon his cheek. If this most real and genuine earthly tie expresses itself so simply, how much more shall your Heavenly Father in like manner receive into deepest

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and most genuine fellowship all who seek the strength and comfort of the everlasting arms. These are some of the reasons why the Friends, who have earned the reputation of being the most spiritual of all Protestant people, eliminate from their practice the outward form and ceremony. These are some of the reasons why to them

“The Holy Supper is kept, indeed,
In whatso we share with another’s need,”

and the holiest communion is that experience in their inner life, when

“The world that time and sense have known
Falls off and leaves us God alone.”

Again, in the realm of Church polity, religious activity and worship, this fundamental basis of faith logically eliminates all types of sacerdotalism. The Church must be democratic in form of government, where the voice and personality of each and everyone counts in the common life for all it is worth before God. In matters of spiritual life the authority of priest, or minister, or Church, as standing between the individual

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soul and God, is not only inconsistent with the basis of faith, but is contrary to the New Testament teaching. Historically speaking it is the dogma of a Church hierarchy which in this way sought to dominate man into meek submission, and cower him beneath the threat of an ecclesiastical big stick, which assumed the power to fall on him in the hereafter, as well as to beat him into subjection while he eked out his spiritual existence in a wicked world. On the other hand this principle raises a voice against that modern tendency which assumes to let a man's religious activity limit itself to occupying a seat in the meeting for worship, and contributing, usually in a meagre way, to the financial support of the Church. The minister is supposed to provide him with a weekly spiritual ration, properly seasoned with ecclesiastical dogma, while his religious muscles become weak and flabby for want of use, and his anæmic soul is headed for the hospital, which becomes the path to his spiritual grave.

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The man with his spiritual life built upon the true basis of faith enters the hour of worship, not to hear the preacher, to be pleased with the music, or to enjoy the fellowship of kindred spirits. These must be incidental to that solemn search on the part of his own spirit, for that touch and communion with the Great Spirit of our Father who is not only in heaven, but whose presence pervades the secret recesses of the human heart, and waits in the inner chamber of the soul for us to receive our share of his illimitable life. That soul which has not fed at this inward table of the Lord goes away from the hour of worship hungry.

In conclusion, it is fitting to note the depth at which this basis of faith lies, and the position it holds in the light of some present day tendencies. In an age which has been called an age of doubt, when a practical agnosticism pervades much of the thinking world, in a generation when the outworks of the fortress of faith have seemingly one by one been taken, and the faith

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of many has crumbled beneath the assault, be it known that this principle of direct and immediate personal dealings between the soul and God lies so far within and behind the lines of attack, that those who abide within its citadel have done little more than see the smoke of the battle, caused by the attack of materialism on the heights of spirituality. What is material, of the earth earthy, in our religion may succumb, but what is essentially spiritual will tower above all the strife, stronger, more virile, more vital than ever.

Suppose for a moment, for the sake of laying bare the impregnable position of a vital, personal faith in God, that the worst of all the arrogant claims of the rationalist, the materialist, and the scientist are true. Suppose they have upset with their theory of evolution the pet idea which the Church has held for so long as to the method the Almighty used when he created man; suppose they have with their destructive criticism torn the Bible into shreds; suppose

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they have, as with bullets, riddled man's belief in the miracles; suppose they have made man believe that there was no virgin birth, no cross on a Calvary, no empty tomb; suppose that their case were so strong (a supposition which even the most daring rationalist knows he has no ground for making), that ninety per cent. of all this story about Jesus appears as a myth and fable; suppose all this had a fair chance of dominating human thought (a chance which is absurd in the light of the most recent thought), even then the basis of faith in God's personal dealings with man is untouched. The man who is acquainted with the Eternal Christ still walks with him in trusting assurance. The man who has yielded himself in his day of visitation, to the call, the invitation, the summons, the wooing influence of the "Inner Light" still moves within the brightness of its shining. Within the warmth of his overshadowing presence the soul that has fellowshiped with God basks in "the light of his countenance."

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The essentials of faith are forever secure in the heart of man and the heart of God. Here is the safety vault of the ages, based on the rock of humanity's fundamental and divine equipment to receive God, and guarded by the presence of the eye which neither slumbers nor sleeps.

All the disturbances of the intellectual, scientific and social world are but billows caused by surface storms. Meanwhile the soul in immediate communion with God, through the Eternal Christ, abides within the depths of the infinite ocean of God's life in a peace which the world can neither give nor take away.

"So, through the thunder comes a human voice
Saying, 'O heart I made, a heart beats here!
Face, my hands fashioned, see it in myself!
Thou hast no power nor may'st conceive of mine:
But love I gave thee, with myself to love,
And thou must love me who have died for thee!'"

II

THE GUIDE OF THE QUAKER LIFE

Within! within, O turn
Thy spirit's eyes, and learn
Thy wandering senses gently to control;
Thy dearest Friend dwells deep within thy soul,
And asks thyself of thee,
That heart, and mind, and sense, he may make whole
In perfect harmony.
Doth not thy inmost spirit yield
And sink where Love stands thus revealed?
Be still and veil thy face,
The Lord is here, this is his holy place!
Then back to earth, and 'mid its toil and throng
One glance within will keep thee calm and strong;
And when the toil is o'er, how sweet, O God, to flee
Within, to thee!

Gerhard Tersteegen.

Let me hear
The still small voice which reached the prophet's ear;
Read in my heart a still diviner law
Than Israel's leader on his tables saw!

Whittier.

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are
sons of God.

The Apostle Paul.

The indwelling Spirit guides and controls the surrendered life, and the Christian's constant and supreme business is obedience to him.

Discipline.

II

THE GUIDE OF THE QUAKER LIFE

A CHAIN on the wrist and a halter around the neck are not pleasing metaphors with which to deal in speaking of humanity, unless it can be done in such delicate phraseology that the particular individual addressed appears at least to escape the restraint implied. And yet a strong case might be presented to show that the human family willingly, or protestingly submits to the pull of the rope drawn on by those forces without, which have so much to do in shaping man's activity and destiny. From the sensualist handcuffed to his vice, and the drunkard led on by his appetite, up through the scale to the noble youth wooed by the inspiration of a great ideal, and the strong man shaping his daily course by the chart of a worthy purpose, men everywhere and

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always are being led. The grade may be up where the way is hard, or down where the way is easy, or on the dead level where man eats the very dust his progress makes, but the fact remains that he is in leading-strings, and most if not all are pretty good followers. The question of life then for each one becomes, not a debate as to whether he shall be led or not, but as to the quality of leadership to which he shall submit. A glance at some of the forces that operate to lead humanity will not be out of place as a background for an analysis of the Guide of the Quaker Life.

There is the pleasure lover, the one who loves it so abnormally that he lives for it. It is the goal of his existence. The early Friends followed Puritanical influence in denouncing pleasure as such, and in stifling the æsthetical side of life. Pleasure, art, music were all tabooed. The years, however, have worn away the rigidity of this protest, and, in spite of Puritanical and early Quakerly indictments, every normal

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person has a liking for pleasure. He regards it as a necessary spice, which is rightly desirable to make palatable many otherwise disagreeable dishes. Pleasure in itself is not sin, and there is nothing in the essentials of Quakerism to forbid its legitimate use in an uplifting and wholesome atmosphere. But there are those who would live on spice, who care for little else, who make use of other things only as an excuse to keep their palates continually inflamed with the condiments of experience.

The Epicurean was not peculiar to ancient Greece, or to the type observed in Palestine in Jesus' day, who said to his soul, "Eat, drink and be merry." Like the boy who cannot be made to eat bread unless it is thickly coated with marmalade, this modern Epicurean would have everything smeared with pleasure. Pleasure as a leading-string in life indicates a childish outlook and a stunted development, and, like the will-o'-the-wisp, allures to a wild chase, but yields no permanent return.

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There is the man led on by business, for whom the dollar and its accumulation is the goal of existence. He is not the master, but the slave of his work. He claims to own the business, his letter-heads would indicate as much, but everyone knows that in reality the business owns him. He has petted and pampered the young lion until the brute in its strength has placed its foot on his neck. He used to run the machinery, now he is little more than a cog in some wheel, made to mesh with other cogs in the corporation. Everyone appreciates the necessity of business, and knows the unavoidable pull of it, but something is wrong somewhere when the halter of work is so tight it shuts off the breath that longs to take refreshing draughts of a cultural, or religious atmosphere, and when the rope of business is so short that it permits feeding only on mercenary provender. In all lines of legitimate business the reputation of the Friends is by no means unenviable. As the world estimates success the Friends have been successful in the field

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of the farmer, the factory of the manufacturer and the countinghouse of the merchant. But the picture portrayed when the farmer leaves his plow in the furrow, and his mowing machine in the field, and, hitching up his team, drives, it may be, miles to Fifth Day morning meeting, is evidence that something other than the lure of bulging barns and abundant harvests is the mainspring of the Friend's life. In the greedy tumultuous modern world of business where the money-maker consecrates his ability, and gives freely of self and gain for the sake of the Kingdom, and where the employer makes a distinction, and that a Christian one, between his treatment of machines and men (attitudes which have been characteristic of the Friend in business for two centuries),—in this self-centered world such living testimonies bear witness to the fact that something other than

“The lust of power, the love of gain”

has been the guide of the Quaker life.

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Turning to a higher plane, many regard conscience as a sufficient guide, even in morals and religion. As a matter of fact, however, conscience is less an inspiration than a check. Its main function is to put out the danger signal, to call a halt. It is the protecting rail by the side of the path. It is judgment in the realm of ethics. Wrong, not right, arouses it. Carlyle said, "Had we never sinned we should have had no conscience." To follow conscience may lead to little more than a stationary existence, not a moral and spiritual progress. Conscience can be trained to speak or not to speak, like the watch-dog, educated to wag his tail at the approach of some, to growl at the approach of others. The worst sins in the history of religion, from the drowning of her babe in the Ganges River by the Hindoo mother, to the massacre of St. Bartholomew, have been committed without a compunction of conscience.

The searing of conscience is too easy an operation to need the skill of a surgeon.

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Barclay calls conscience the lantern, and points to its ultimate failure, unless it have the light of the Divine Spirit burning within it. His figure may be out of harmony with the spirit of modern philosophy, and not in keeping with the present interpretation of the immanence of God, but it will still serve to emphasize the necessity for man to have as his ultimate guide something more positively effective, and less subject to the drag of circumstance, environment and even personal opinion, than that valuable monitor of the human spirit called conscience.

The Friend in his early teaching, as set forth in the writings and experiences of George Fox, and in the theological treatise of Robert Barclay, maintained in thought and practice that it is man's privilege to be led directly by the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit stirs the feelings, trains the conscience, illuminates the mind, and arouses the will. Nothing is clearer than that God is now as in the olden time speaking to men. "I will pour forth of my Spirit

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upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." (Acts 2: 17.) This is as much a promise for the modern prophet to apply to this age as it was for the Apostle Peter to use on the Day of Pentecost. The measure of modern inspiration is determined by the human capacity for, and sensitiveness to the heavenly light, not by any ecclesiastical or priestly limitations set upon the outpouring of that divine life, which is in and around all things.

This fact of spiritual leadership, attested in the present, as well as in the Seventeenth Century, by the personal Christian experience, shifted the ultimate authority for human action and belief from the Church and from the Book to the Holy Spirit. As a matter of fact we find within our reach for Christian growth three important things, the Spirit-developed Church, the Spirit-inspired Book, and the Spirit-led life. These three factors are vital in the experi-

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ence of the disciple. The Holy Spirit must always be given precedence. He guides and controls the surrendered life. The Christian's constant and supreme business is obedience to him. He must lead. On the one side stands the Holy Scriptures, which, as interpreted by the Holy Spirit, are an unfailing source of spiritual truth for molding the life and shaping the character. On the other side stands the Church, representing the consensus of spiritual experience attained by those whose lives have been surrendered to the Spirit's leading. To the Church the believer looks for fellowship; upon the Church he leans, recognizing that the sanctified conclusions of the Church are above the judgment of a single individual. Thus the Christian is strengthened by the truths revealed to him as he prayerfully studies the pages of the Scriptures, and is fortified and supported by a Church fellowship into which he fully and heartily enters. He then finds himself sensitive to hear the voice of God speaking even in the silence

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to his soul, and equipped to see the light from above falling upon the path and pointing the way in which he should walk. This in substance is what the Friends have taught about the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Here is the Guide of the Quaker life. This is the distinctive message which the Society of Friends has contributed to the life of Protestantism.

The world has borne witness that these people moved up against the current of the popular cry, of the easy way, of environment and circumstance,—moved up against the current when it meant persecution, social ostracism, loss of business, and on occasion even imprisonment and death. The world has acknowledged that the Friends conducted themselves in this way because they were guided by a deeper principle than the impulses which mold the life of the average man. Yielding to the pull of this great spiritual law they walked serenely into the face of the storms of human life, as the iceberg held in the grip of the ocean

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current plows its way against wind and wave.

Such testimony, substantiated by personal experience within and beyond the limits of the Society of Friends, needs no defense because experience echoed and re-echoed everywhere is its own best argument. However, the strength of this claim that man may be led by the Holy Spirit is reinforced if we view it, first, in the light of Scriptural statement, second, as resting on the basis of faith, and third, as compared with the methods of God in other departments of his creation.

1. The patriarchs heard the call of the Spirit of God. By his guidance their careers were governed. The prophets were unceasingly faithful in delivering the message under the caption, "Thus saith Jehovah." Through the prophetic voice the people learned the will of God. Jesus definitely promised this spiritual leadership to his disciples; "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter,

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that he may be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth." (John 14:16, 17.) "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth." (John 16:13.) The scene on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) is the first great witness to the validity of the Master's promise. The guidance given to the Apostle Paul in shaping his missionary journeys (Acts 13:2; 16:6; 20:22, 23; 27:23, 24) finds expression in his epistles in such statements as "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Cor. 3:16.) "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." (Rom. 8:14.)

2. A life led by the Holy Spirit is the logical outcome of a faith based on an immediate personal relationship with God. It is consistent with the nature of God that when he begins a vital Christian experience in any heart he will continue that experience in harmony with the methods used in its origin. If, without the aid of ecclesiastical authority, ordinance, or sacrament, God

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begins a work of grace in the human spirit by direct and immediate communion, is it not reasonable to believe that the same God will nourish, support and guide that life,—and this by the direct and positive leadership of the Holy Spirit?

The superstructure of faith must be consistent with the foundation. Its basis is deeply bedded in a personal relationship between the soul and God. The architect who drew the foundation plans made also the drafts and estimates for the whole building. By what right, or with what expectation of success, does a Christian man assume to erect on such a basis a life structure, shaped on any other principle than that which governed the placing of the foundation stones? A man can build a flimsy shack upon a cement foundation, and keep it in place by props braced to its sides, and guy-ropes tied to neighboring stakes and trees. But the proper structure for a cement foundation is a cement building, whose every wall shall be bedded into the

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foundations themselves, fastened to, and rising from them around those hidden reinforcements, which make the whole a physical unit. We can erect, if we will, on the great foundations of faith in Jesus Christ shabby huts of Christian experience, held in place by the stays of material prosperity, and the guy-ropes of pleasure and circumstance, but the promises of our Master, fulfilled in his early disciples and in the lives of our fathers, point to a type of character, not only resting on the life of God, but molded and shaped by him both in the common daily routine, and in the decisions of its crucial hours. The Spirit-led life is the logical product of the Spirit-born soul.

3. In the light of man's increasing knowledge of nature in her manifold activities we are more willing than ever to recognize the hand of God in material phenomena. The laws of nature are the thoughts of God; he who discovers those laws thinks God's thought after him. There can therefore be no essential quarrel between science and

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revelation. They are both expressions of the same God. If we learn the ways of God in the world about us, we may presume, at least, that his methods will not differ on that highest level of his creation, the spirit of man. The law of gravitation holds the stars in their places and sustains the earth in its orbit. The same law causes the book to fall to the floor and the leaf to flutter to the ground. Or again, the world of the microscope is in harmony with the universe of the telescope. The force in yonder space which operates to draw together the nebulous gases, and to whirl them around each other until a star comes into being, finds expression in the activity of the electron, which is believed to be a component part of the atom. Electrons, which in size are to the atom what a pin head is to the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral, appear to be endowed with a permanent electric charge and congregate in whirling masses to form the atom itself.

Thus behind the star is a force, and be-

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hind the atom is a force, and this single force is the heart of creation. Here we approach the realm where it is easy to see our God at work. To consider that the same power causes the leaf to fall which holds the earth in place, and the same force is active in the atom as worked when the Spirit of God moved upon chaos, and a world came into being, is to make us feel that even in the world of our common lives God has a rightful sovereignty. A contemplation of scientific data makes us realize that Jesus was uttering more than idealistic fancies, when he mentioned the divine care of the sparrow and the robing of the lily, as object lessons for our simple trust in the Great Father's care.

Beside this as a corollary we recognize that the Spirit of him who moved upon the patriarchs, who spoke to the prophets, who guided the apostles and shaped the lives of the early Christians, will not decline to give his spiritual leadership to the weakest soul. In fact, he who is the same yesterday, today

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and forever, leads men now as he led men of old. The springs of divine revelation have not dried up; the current of spiritual leadership is still a potent factor in the lives of men. If the early Friend learned this from his Bible and vital Christian experience, shall the modern Friend take lower ground, when the very science which the man of faith has so often feared, conspires to fortify this fundamental principle of the spiritual life?

If in watching the long flight of the bird to find a summer home, I note that it follows a leading which points the path along the trackless atmosphere, shall not I, yielding myself to the Power in my heart, bear witness that

“He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone
Will lead my steps aright”?

For the bird we say this is instinct, for man this is the Holy Spirit.

In the rigid application of this principle to his inner and his outer life the early

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Friend found himself crossing seas that had long remained unnavigated, and sailing between a Scylla and a Charybdis which loomed on either side in no mean fashion. Hitherto the soul had felt its way out into the life of God, as a ship sailing in a heavy fog. Under the dogma of predestination, as then taught, some were destined to be saved, others doomed to be lost. The human part in this was a negligible quantity. The dread uncertainty which this bred in man's soul was like a load on his life. He could not tell whether this burden around his neck, the sense his soul possessed of God, was the cord by which the Divine Spirit sought to lead him in the green pastures and by the still waters, or a noose, which, when pulled tight, would hang him upon some judgment gibbet. He hoped for the former, he lived in dread of the latter. Christian assurance as understood today, where a soul can say, "I know I am saved;" "I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed to him," was unknown. With his

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proclamation that divine grace was free for every soul, the early Friend let the sunlight penetrate the mist in which man had been groping. With his preaching of a sense of divine favor for every believer, the shroud of gloom through which man had been wandering lifted, and he discovered again the truth of the Apostle's great assertion, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:38, 39.) This message of early Quakerism was the bugle-call announcing a spiritual emancipation which has increased until Protestantism everywhere proclaims it.

The whole range of our practical life comes under the sway of this spiritual leadership. The Christ, whom the Friend acknowledges as Master, is not simply the guest admitted to the parlor of respectability; he is the companion of the kitchen and

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there is not a closet in the soul to which he does not hold the key. In other words, we must learn to find in business and pleasure alike the will of God, and finding it, let that will always be our guide. "D. V." is not only a polite verbal condescension to the Almighty, it must be for us the primary consideration.

"Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them thine."

The Friend has never earned the reputation of being an impracticable idealist. He knows that every normal life must have in it much of social relation, much of business and somewhat of pleasure. Every man makes a solution for his own life of the problem presented by these factors. The Friend believes the answer to his life question cannot be found with these elements alone. He must add to these the higher law of divine leadership. In this he has not eliminated the other factors and resorted to monasticism, nor has he permitted the divine element to play a merely professional and

perfunctory part, and thus been content to wear his Christianity like a suit of clothes, which on occasion he can put on, and at will take off. He has boldly entered the narrow channel between these two rocks and attempted to shape his course with the spiritual element of life as pilot.

If for two centuries he has vindicated in any little measure the practical value of this type of life, by holding himself well poised and with his spirit peaceful, when those about him were rocking and shaking, it has been because the theory of divine leadership has for him become a practical reality. He has literally been in the grip and under the sway of an inner principle, which has gone far beyond the temporal and material setting of his surface life.

The moons of Jupiter are eight, and they move around the planet while it in turn moves around the sun. If the planet should break the law that shapes its orbit and make one of its moons the center around which to move, a physical cataclysm would take

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place which would shake the course of distant stars. There are many satellites to every human life. The cause for trouble in our affairs lies in the fact that we are tied to our satellites, instead of making them subject to us. We break away from our divinely appointed orbit around the Son of God, and attempt to negotiate a path around and among these things of mundane and temporal significance. Or, to change the figure, we are tethered like sheep to the stakes of pleasure, business, the social whirl; and like sheep we meander round and round, and train our consciences to acquiesce, while we feed our souls on weeds, witchgrass and husks. We must learn to tether our souls to the throne of the Shepherd God, and in the very tethering enter freedom, liberty, the abundant life. Then we shall know that the whole range of human experience, the universe itself and the infinite life of God is the field in which our souls may feed, the field in which he shall make us to lie down in green pastures, and lead us beside the still waters.

III

**THE CREED OF THE QUAKER
CHURCH**

Thought is deeper than all speech,
Feeling deeper than all thought;
Souls to souls can never teach
What unto themselves was taught.

We are spirits clad in veils;
Man by man was never seen;
All our deep communing fails
To remove the shadowy screen.

C. P. Cranca.

To do thy will is more than praise,
As words are less than deeds,
And simple trust can find thy ways
We miss with chart of creeds.

Whittier.

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child: now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things. For now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known.

The Apostle Paul.

I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come.

Jesus.

III

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IN my dreams I saw a large and magnificent estate which had been presented to a little boy by a very rich and generous man. He withheld himself from the lad for a time, leaving him to wander at will through the fields, the forests and along the roads. He hoped that the boy's natural interest would lead him to form an estimate of the nature of the donor. The man was not mistaken. One morning the lad started out into the midst of all the natural beauties and wonders, determined if possible to discover the kind of man who had given him all this wealth, and resolved that, if he was successful in his quest, he would formulate his discovery in words and write it down, that he might then always be positive on such an important matter.

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Seeing a field by the roadside he climbed the fence, and found himself in the midst of a profusion of spring wild flowers. The violets and anemones, arbutus and columbine, filled the air with fragrance and his eye with a sense of beauty. As he stooped to fill his hands with all he could hold of this loveliness it was suddenly impressed upon him that the giver was one who loved fragrance and beauty. So he hurried to the house and wrote down his definition, "I believe the one who gave me this estate loves fragrance and beauty." He went out again to find more of such tokens as would confirm his statement, and he noted the birds singing in the tree tops, the bees sucking the honey, and the cattle grazing in the field. He pondered his earlier statement, and realizing its inadequacy, he changed it so that it read, "I believe the one who gave me this estate loves beauty and fragrance, and is fond of the birds, the bees and the cattle." Surely that described him, but when he found in the wood paths signs pointing the

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way to pleasant places, and warnings set up over poisonous growths, he began to realize that the giver had in his heart a love and concern for the little boy, and so he was obliged to change his definition once more to make it large enough to fit his newly discovered truth.

Then he longed to find the giver himself, who must really be his friend. One day he met him in the forest road, and when he saw him he knew that all those definitions which he had made were painfully inadequate. He must go to the house and rewrite all his definitions. As weeks went on and he came to know the giver more intimately, he began to understand that all efforts at definition, as valuable as they were for him while he was making them, were in reality so incommensurate that he must find another and better way to express his belief in his new companion. So he set to work to let the spirit of his generous and loving friend mold and shape his spirit until in his love and life, his likes and dislikes, he

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should reflect to all others that same great personality. He discovered as he made this the principle of his life, that the definitions he had made were but human conceptions which, almost as soon as formulated, were outgrown. His relation to his friend, with his wonderful works, and gifts and love, became hereafter a great spiritual adventure. He began to comprehend that the richness and vastness of his friend's personality, expressed in such manifoldness, would require an eternity to explore, while the depths of his nature and wisdom, only infinity could fathom. All this is but a story, and yet hidden within it lies the secret of the Friends' belief, and on its very surface may be found the reasons why the Society of Friends stands before the world as a creedless church.

The Friends have always had intellectual conceptions regarding divine truth, and they fall closely in line with the fundamental position held by all those who have been recognized as truly evangelical in their char-

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acter and spirit. They have, however, consistently refused to place these in the foreground as the conditions of entrance to their communion, because they have always recognized experience as the basis of faith, and consequently the essential of all true fellowship. Experience always lies beneath any belief expressed in words, and the best intellectual statements fail to describe a vital experience. Men may, and do fellowship together on the basis of a common love and common devotion, who in opinion stand radically opposed to one another. On the other hand, those who mentally assent to the same creed are often so far apart in their inner experience, in their loves, and in the objects of their devotion that their intellectual unity of faith is little other than a nominal affair.

This fact of a constantly unfolding spiritual experience as the platform of the Quaker fellowship, and consequently as the Quaker substitute for a creed, finds vindication in many realms of thought and life, both his-

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torical and contemporary. The mention of some of these by way of illustration, together with a discussion of the inadequacy of the creed as a basis for Church membership, will help to clarify the Friends' position set forth in the previous pages.

The method of the child in learning things about his estate is the method of the scientist in his search for truth. He began by stating what he found in the form of definitions. Inferences from these were truths. Then, on further research, when he discovered that his previously conceived truth was frequently error, he changed his terminology and called his conclusions hypotheses. That is, his inferences were held to be tentatively true, as a basis to work on, until by further research more truth should be unfolded. By this method the scientist became free in his quest, and with open mind faced the universe, which has poured out upon him such a wealth of knowledge that the progress of science is one of the marvels of the present age. We live daily in expect-

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tant wonder of what new story the scientist will tell us next.

One day man found himself on the face of the earth, that is, in the expression of the psychologist, he came to self-consciousness, or in the phrase of Scripture, "Man became a living soul." (Gen. 2:7.) He forthwith set about examining the great world in which he had thus come to self-realization. He noted its physical construction and forms of life; he discovered his own mental powers; he entered into fellowship with God. By a combination of human outreaching and divine unfolding he formulated opinions about God, and man and the world. These in the realm of theology are called dogmas. They are parallel to the child's definition of his friend and to the scientist's hypotheses. If man had held his dogmas in the same way that the child and the scientist held their findings, the progress of Christianity would have kept pace with the advance of science, and the world would have been saved much hardship, intolerance,

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and even devastating bloodshed, caused by the fact that man substituted his fixed and rigid dogma for the Holy Spirit as the final basis of religious authority.

The story of that matchless Book of divine revelation, the Holy Scriptures, is one which shows practically this same method. It is an axiom of Biblical interpretation that this Book, which covers in its authorship so many centuries, is a progressive revelation. God did not give the whole of his truth in Genesis; nor did the bloody campaigns of Joshua, or the spirit of the imprecatory Psalms tell of the divine love revealed in Jesus Christ. All through those generations man learned a little, and then more and more of the divine nature until at last Jesus taught men to call God, Father. Here again, man, through the pages of this Book, is seen generation by generation, and age by age slowly climbing up the altar stairs of divine revelation, pressing beneath his feet the half truths and larger truths continually given, until fellow-

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shiping with him who brought immortality to light and pointed man the path to the abundant life, he enters into communion with the infinite and eternal heart of a Heavenly Father. And, even then, he discovers that he stands only upon the shore of an ocean of infinite love, waves of which, beating upon his own life, tell of depths which only infinity knows, and eternity alone can reveal.

In the light of this, which is so apparent to him who ponders the unfolding Scriptural message, the change of method, which the Christian Church adopted after the first century of its life, comes as a distinct and disappointing surprise. Man not only declared the canon of Scripture closed, and said by Church fiat that there could be no more literature divinely inspired, but the Church defined what it had found of God, and condensing these dogmas into creeds, sent them forth into the world with even more authority than they claimed for the Scriptures. What the Church said was taken

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as the infallible guide of the soul. The Church, in other words, deliberately placed itself between man and his Bible; it blocked the way between man and his Christ. Believe what the Church said, or come under judgment with the pangs of eternal separation from God hanging over the resisting soul. Moreover, nothing beyond what the dogma and creed stated should be preached, for the streams of revelation had dried up, the Great Revealer had said his last word, the definitions of duty, man, truth were complete and final. And they took this position in direct contradiction to the words of Jesus, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth." (John 16: 12, 13.)

This position is especially reprehensible when we take into consideration the genesis and the contents of the great creeds of Christian history. The early statements of Christian belief, like the "Apostles' Creed"

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(which by the way was not written by the Apostles), the "Athanasian Creed," and the "Nicene Creed" were not only the residuum of controversy, but they were essentially compromises, in which one or both sides had sacrificed for the sake of harmony some principle which they had hitherto devoutly believed. An examination of the contents of these creeds shows that with hardly an exception they intellectualize discipleship, and, doctrinal agreement being the essential thing, they infer that Christianity is a dogma rather than a life.

The creed has its place. Everyone who thinks has his creed. The Friends are not without their statements of belief, but they insist that the creed has no place as a basis of Church membership. The reasons for this insistence we hope to show. The creed at best is a concise statement of belief, embodying in verbal form an experience through which an individual has passed. It is the precipitate of a religious experience. It is the crystalization in intellectual form

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of the feelings of the heart and the aspirations of the soul, in so far as such a thing is possible. As such it has its real value in at least three ways.

First, the creed is valuable as summarizing an experience through which the individual or church has passed at a given time. It is a good mile-stone along the way. The creed marks progress if it is larger, fuller, deeper than the one made a year ago. If it remains the same year after year it simply shows that while we have been going through the motions of progress we have in reality been standing still. We have been active, but our activity has not carried us anywhere. There has been much motion but little progress.

Second, the creed is highly desirable in the process of its making as an intellectual gymnastic. We are urged by the Apostle to be able to give a reason for the faith that is within us. We must know clearly what that faith is. Such a process compels the soul to take count of stock. The effort to

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formulate one's creed often prevents spiritual bankruptcy.

Third, if the spiritual life has reached its terminal station, if there is no other field of truth through which to range, no more open country of divine revelation, no more eternal and infinite vistas in the divine nature as yet unexplored, then the creed is a most excellent bunting-post. If the soul has reached its maturity, and has passed into a senile condition, then there are no better grave clothes in which to give it a decent burial than the phrases of a creed. It is dead, so is the creed. If they fit each other let them be buried together.

There are, however, occasions when such an arraignment of the creed seems too severe, for it often becomes an anchor for the soul when the breakers are roaring, the night is dark and the winds are contrary. Yes, but there come storms in every life when no creedal anchor will hold, and there are deep waters in experience where no intellectual conceptions can touch the rocks

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below, or, touching them, can hold the soul from being driven by the tides of disappointment upon the ledges of despair. In the crisis the creed is pitifully insufficient, and for that reason, were there no other, the Friends base their fellowship upon a vital experience of the divine life within, and the divine leadership without. This must forever be deeper than the intellectual concept of it, and the creed can only be the lame mental effort made from time to time to describe the hidden development of an experimental faith, a faith which grows from more to more.

“Our little systems have their day,
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.”

Given a Christian experience thus divinely begun and divinely led in its vital unfolding, and given an intellectual conception of truth, or a creed, which is anything more than a tentative statement of soul growth, and the spirit of man finds itself in a strait jacket, forced to adjust itself to

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certain rigidly defined lines. The shoe, which will today fit the child's foot, six months from now, if it has not been worn, will create a small sized rebellion the minute an attempt is made to put it on. Likewise the suit of clothes, perfect in size today, becomes in a little while ludicrously small. The shoes and the clothes have not changed, but the child has. It is not otherwise with a creed for a growing soul. At best it is a shoe to be outgrown, and a garment which soon becomes too small. "No man putteth new wine into old wine-skins; else the wine will burst the skins, and the wine perisheth, and the skins: but they put new wine into fresh wine-skins." (Mark 2: 22.)

The creed is inadequate as a basis of Church membership; it stands against the democracy of the human spirit; it fails to give due recognition to differences of age, divergences in temperament, grades of intellectual culture and types of genuine experience. A young man from college seeks a church home. His choice is not

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determined by the creed, but by social and spiritual atmospheres. He is spiritually minded and a sincere Christian. When he studies the creed, he discovers that it is not an expression of his own faith. He agrees with some portions of it, with other parts he differs. He must sign it if he is to join this church with which in spirit and life he sincerely fellowships. What shall he do? For the sake of the fellowship he craves he will probably assent to the rigid intellectual requirement which stands between him and the church of his choice. He will sign the creed, but with "mental reservations" (a phrase which is a poor apology for intellectual falsehood). Within him, however, rises a protest which finds utterance in the memorable lines:

"But still my human hands are weak
To hold your iron creeds:
Against the words ye bid me speak
My heart within me pleads."

Or, here is the boy twelve years of age. His spiritual life, cultivated and warmed into activity at the hearth-stone of the home,

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seeks expression at the altar of the church. He must in his immaturity sign the same creed as the college trained adult. Every one knows that he would never formulate his faith in the phraseology of that creed which has been framed by those who are mature, if not ripe in Christian experience. Or, at the other extreme, there comes seeking admission to the church the one whose Christian experience has been hammered into shape by hard knocks, and by rubbing elbows with the struggling world. His conceptions of divine truth at no stage of his growth can be couched in the terminology of the class-room. These illustrations are sufficient to demonstrate how inadequate a creed is as a basis for Church membership. The only adequate basis for Church fellowship is an experience, first of personal relations with God, and second of direct leadership by his Spirit. These relations and this leadership will differ in each and every case just as an earthly father's relations and directions to his children differ with their

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needs, temperaments and ages. But this communion and this guidance in every instance will be the growing expressions of a mutual love and a mutual faith.

The bearing of this principle on the great question of "Church Unity" is as pertinent as it is timely. The true basis of fellowship within the membership of a church is the only adequate principle upon which denominations, differing in historical antecedents and intellectual conceptions, can ever hope to stand together. No two minds ever think alike, or state a truth in the same way; but love is the common denominator of humanity. When the love of man reciprocates the embrace of the love of God it establishes an experience common in degree to all and lying far beneath the depths yet fathomed by any dogma. A common religious experience, not a creed, is the only adequate basis of a real Church unity. When denominations cease their anxious search for the points of contact among their sectarian dogmas, and give an equal concern to lay-

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ing bare the foundations of religious experience, and to building thereon, not intellectual scaffolding, but a structure composed of love, service and sacrifice, expressed in life, "Church Unity" will cease to be a vision, a dream and a question for debate; it will have become a reality. Conferences on "Faith and Order" can never hope to create "Church Unity." Unity is a flower that grows only out of experience and in an atmosphere of love. Given these, and the things that hold denominations apart will melt like icicles in the shining of the warm spring sun, and the outward coming together will be but the expression of the common inward experience.

Bergson is telling us that creation is even now in the process, that God still has all of life upon the potter's wheel, that existence is a flowing stream; and Eucken is proclaiming that Christianity is a progressive historic movement still in the making. If, in the realm of present day thought, we have

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philosophical testimony, thus running parallel to our main contention, that the Christian faith is an experience growing and unfolding into the ever enlarging life of God, have we not additional evidence to show that the creed as such can be little else than an intellectual stepping-stone, to aid us as we rise to heights of clearer spiritual vision? And, if these and other similar teachers are thus gathering up the consensus of opinion on religious matters, may we not find herein a reason why the man of the world has so little use in his life for the Church, which puts so much emphasis upon dogma, so little upon experience; gives so much place to creed and ritual, so little to life and conduct?

If on such testimony as has been given we are prepared to admit that the creed falls short as a common platform of individual or interdenominational fellowship, and cannot express the permanent status of a living soul in its relation to the living God, we are ready to acknowledge that the real Chris-

C R E E D O F T H E C H U R C H

tian experience may be described in terms of a great spiritual adventure.

“New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient
good uncouth;

They must upward still, and onward, who would keep
abreast of Truth.”

For two hundred and fifty years the people called Friends have lived this spiritual experience, and have borne consistent testimony to its reality. The trend of modern philosophical teaching opens up a territory for the soul's exploration which is in most hearty accord with man's inner searchings after God. Jesus pointed the way to, and intimated the leadership for this great adventure when he called attention to truths that were yet to be revealed, and to a new leadership which was about to be given. The canon of Scripture has been closed, but the channels of divine revelation remain open. We still live in the dispensation of the Holy Spirit.

We do not move in our faith out upon the carefully laid dogmatic rails of an intel-

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lectual theology, where all our thinking is done for us, and where with inert minds we pass over a certain well defined and previously prepared road-bed to our eternal destiny. This is the easy way; mental assent to what others have thought is the only requirement. But we sail out upon the trackless ocean of the infinite and eternal life of our God, where every way is open before us, and where the spirit of adventure thrills the soul as we enter upon the exploration of the nature and the works of our Heavenly Father. We have no track laid for us, but better still, we have the chart of a divine purpose for each and every life; we have the sextant of a personal faith in God through Christ, who has immediate dealings with the soul; and we have the compass of a spiritual leadership, which always points true. With these we are safe. With these we are free. With these we have gone "the whole round of creation."

"Each faculty tasked
To perceive him, has gained an abyss, where a dewdrop
was asked.

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Have I knowledge? confounded it shrivels at Wisdom laid bare.

Have I forethought? how purblind, how blank, to the Infinite Care!

Do I task any faculty highest to image success?

I but open my eyes,—and perfection, no more and no less,
In the kind I imagined, full-fronts me, and God is seen
God

In the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in the soul and the clod."

And then, when I face what has been called the Great Unknown, and enter the straits which lead out across the bar to the uncharted ocean of the life after death, I am still at peace, I am still free, I am still safe, for though

"I know not where his islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond his love and care."

IV

**THE FIELD OF THE QUAKER
MESSAGE**

To thee our full humanity,
Its joys and pains, belong;
The wrong of man to man on thee
Inflicts a deeper wrong.

Whittier.

The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever.

The Revelation of John.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

Jesus.

With faith in the wisdom of Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and believing that it is his purpose to make his Church on earth a power for righteousness and truth, the Friends labor for the alleviation of human suffering; for the intellectual, moral and spiritual elevation of mankind; and for purified and exalted citizenship. The Friends believe war to be incompatible with Christianity, and seek to promote peaceful methods for the settlement of all differences between nations and between men.

Discipline.

IV

THE FIELD OF THE QUAKER MESSAGE

“CHRIST for every life and all of life,” is the motto of a great missionary program. It contains in a phrase the whole message of present day Christianity. Parallel with the call to the soul of man to make itself right with God it places the obligation to make all human relations harmonize with God’s law of righteousness. The evangelistic note and the social note make a harmony, not a discord; they elaborate in modern language the two great commandments of Jesus, “Thou shalt love thy God,” and “Thou shalt love thy neighbor.” These words of the Master were never separated in his thought, his teaching, or his life. They were the two component parts of a single message.

The Church has, however, in the past

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fallen painfully short of proclaiming this twofold Gospel. It has concerned itself with the saving of the soul out of its evil setting; it has considered that the setting itself was neither possible, nor worthy of salvation. The Gospel was intended to reach down into the mud of the world's filth and drag out to safety a few precious jewels. To make an effort to clean up the mud was beyond its province. This spirit has shown itself in the mutual aloofness existing for so long between the program of the social settlement worker and the program of the neighboring Christian church; and also, in the glibness with which the average minister within a generation has denounced social service as a part of the business of the Church of Christ. The uplift of the individual soul, not the uplift of the community in all phases of its life, has been the acknowledged mission of the Church. Many courageous souls, led by the Holy Spirit, have preached the necessity of righteousness and justice in the industrial,

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political and social conditions of the neighborhoods in which they lived, only to be sternly reminded by those within and outside the Church that their business was to preach the "Simple Gospel," not to be meddling with outside affairs.

Two courses of conduct have characterized great sections of the Christian Church for nineteen centuries. The one found expression in the Middle Ages in monasticism, and in the present century in what we may call "Tolstoyism," a personal withdrawal from the surroundings and obligations of the common life in an effort to keep the soul unsullied and unstained; a following in a literalistic way of some single and isolated injunctions of Jesus, while neglecting the whole tenor of his life. The other looked upon its faith as a matter separate and distinct from its ethical life. It kept its Christianity under lock and key in a compartment of the soul where it could be brought out on occasion. Its conduct was regulated, not by this faith, but by the eth-

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ical standards of its generation. It moved along with the current of the life about it, holding its Christianity as a life-preserver, ever handy in case of need. Neither one of these courses appear to be in harmony with the spirit, teachings and life of him who did not live the ascetic life, and yet on the other hand set himself steadfastly against the downward moral current of his generation. The middle-of-the-road course which he chose was the difficult way. It called forth criticism from both sides. It was the *Via Dolorosa*. It led with unerring directness to Calvary.

The slogan of so-called modern thought, "Back to Christ," has had a striking effect in reviving the long neglected social message of Christianity, and in giving the emphasis, which Jesus himself gave, to the second as well as to the first of his two great commandments. In striking accord with this effort to get back to Christ is the interpretation which the Friends have always placed upon their message in calling it

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“Primitive Christianity Revived.” Not only in the realm of simple faith in God, but also in conduct and service, the modern message of Christianity is sounding the same notes which were proclaimed and practiced by the Friends in the Seventeenth Century. When the preacher today utters the clarion call for righteousness in the affairs of government, justice for all in the courts, simple humanity in industry, high moral standards in social life, and the religious opportunity in education; if he turns to the Journal of George Fox, to the letters sent out by these early Friends to kings and rulers, to the messages they fearlessly delivered to men in places of authority, and to the record of their simple outspoken lives, he will find that in modern terms he is echoing the message of Quakerism, which in this wide field has with unvarying consistency been proclaimed by the Society of Friends for more than two hundred and fifty years.

In bearing this full-orbed Gospel to the world the Friends do not play the role of

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creators, though for the Seventeenth Century they were its rediscoverers. This message found its roots in the work of Moses, who under divine guidance inaugurated for a nation of slaves a social propaganda the modern significance of which the men of this generation are just beginning to understand. The prophets of Israel were great social reformers. Savonarola dominated the city of Florence, John Calvin virtually ruled Geneva, while as a worker in the realm of social righteousness John Knox of Scotland has rarely if ever been equaled. These men applied the Gospel with relentless vigor to the whole of life. The Friends were the allies of these great world prophets. They fought under the same banner; they contended for the same ends. Because their weapons were unique, and their methods of campaign different, as well as because of actual accomplishments, they have won a worthy place among the heroes of social reform.

The Friends have never practiced the

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ascetic life, nor have they easily yielded to the spirit of worldliness. On the basis of their faith which brought to them an immediate recognition of the blessedness of divine fellowship, and under the leadership of the Holy Spirit whose will is their law for every act, they have pioneered in regions of personal conduct, and they have prospected for God in the great realms of moral righteousness. In this they have walked the narrow way, thinking not of consequence for weal or woe, and forsaking every material comfort that the spiritual message of the Christ might be heralded in word and work to the entire range of human experience.

Their meetings were disturbed, their customs were derided, their homes were molested, they languished in prison, some died for their testimony. But through it all they saw only the one Light shining on the path of duty, and they heard but one Voice, "This is the way, walk ye in it." They became the unconscious cross bearers of the Seventeenth Century. Though they were

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unaware of its effect, their quiet endurance of oppression aroused the conscience of the nation, and many of the blessings of civil and religious liberty which we today enjoy were won at the cost of their suffering.

Their belief in the Light that lighteth every man, and their conviction that all alike are susceptible to the divine direction, led them with irresistible logic to the conclusion that every man stands on the same plane with every other man before God, and therefore all men are on the same level as members of society. This was revolutionary. This cut to the quick of long established social customs. For when in their direct and thorough way the Friends began to apply this truth to personal habits of speech and dress, and to the social and moral life of their age, they immediately became a disturbing element in their generation.

On the basis of this truth of essential equality among men the Friend believed it inconsistent to use any titles which placed one man on a different level from another.

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He therefore eliminated from his speech all titles like, "Mr." and "Mrs.," "Hon." and "Rev." and addressed every one simply with his full Christian name. The pronoun "you" was then always used as a plural, and when it was applied to the individual carried with it the subtle insinuation that he was equal to more than one. "You" was thus applied to a recognized superior, while "thou" was used in addressing an inferior. The Friend saw that this was inconsistent with his belief in man's equality. He therefore adopted the use of "thee" and "thou" in addressing all individuals, and "you" only in speaking to more than one. It will be seen then that the origin of the Quaker's "plain speech" came not as the result of a whim or fancy, but was the effort to make the testimony of the lips consistent with the fundamental principle of the religious life. As a question of ethics the peculiar use of a pronoun may today seem a small thing to insist upon, but nevertheless, the "plain speech" of the Quaker is a living witness of

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a one time sincere effort to stand for reality in the little as well as the great things of life. When brought before the courts he refused to take the oath, not only because he believed that Jesus forbade it when he said, "Swear not at all," (Matt. 5:34) but also because its use carried with it the implication that at other times he was not as careful for the truth of his statements.

In the England of George Fox's day it was the custom for men to wear their hats on all occasions, even in the house and in the church. They did, however, make a single exception to this rule and removed their hats when prayer was offered as a sign of reverence for God. At about that time an innovation to this custom was made in the demand that men remove their hats in the presence of the king or his officials. The same requirement was made by Oliver Cromwell and his officers. To this decree the Friends refused obedience. To remove the hat was to deny the essential equality of all men; it was giving to some men the

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same reverence which was given to God. They were abused and frequently haled into prison for their refusal to take the oath, or remove the hat; but prison for them was better than sacrificing a principle which they believed was indispensable to a true understanding of life. For them there was only one royalty. Its standard was not one of blood, or position, or wealth. It was a royalty revealed in those qualities of character which made men the children of the King of kings.

In like manner the Friends by their "plain dress" have consistently maintained a testimony for the simple life. The temples of the Holy Spirit are too sacred to be exploited by the fashion makers either of the Seventeenth or the Twentieth Centuries. In the early years of Quakerism the absence of ornamentation in dress, and the actual severity of garb were due to the Puritanical suppression of the æsthetic sense. In the present generation, while the value of beauty is being recognized, the quiet simplicity and

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modesty of the Friends' dress is a protest by example against the gaudy whims, and even the immoralities of the shifting styles of the passing hour.

The simple life finds among Friends its warmest supporters. They stand on this platform not only for the self-satisfaction and real contentment to be found in it, but because ostentation and show build up artificial walls in humanity's common life. All men cannot be brothers under such a regime.

This actual practice of the brotherhood of man became a mighty leveler in the midst of the upper, middle and lower classes. It cut like a knife down through the crusts of society. The caste systems of India are universally recognized as a social blight. The Friend has maintained a testimony against all caste, not only in India, but also against the caste of aristocracy in England, and the caste of wealth in America, which are parasitical monstrosities, feeding upon the political and social democracy of the English speaking world. To the Friend all

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men are inherently on the same level. In the early day he treated with equal respect for his sacred personality, Oliver Cromwell on the Dictator's throne, the judge on the bench, and the humblest peasant of the realm. They were all alike children of the Heavenly Father. Today the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man are fundamental principles of action in the Society of Friends. In this the Friends believe they consistently follow in the footsteps of him who counseled with Nicodemus, the ruler of the Jews, and sat on the well-curb in conversation with the woman of Samaria; who earned the reputation of being the friend of publicans and sinners, and who feasted the multitudes by the lake shore; who ate with the publicans in the house of Matthew, and was guest in the home at Bethany. Classes and races pale into insignificance when in the affairs of men the Cosmopolitan Christ assumes his rightful place.

When the Friend used his fundamental

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conception of the universal saving Light to form an estimate of man he found that it placed upon him a new valuation. He was no longer a thing, or a mere animal. He was potentially a child of God. This gave the Friend a reverence for personality, a reverence greater than that which he could ever place upon church, altar, or sacrament. God values men more highly than the so-called holy things. Men, not things are God's great concern. This shifted the emphasis from the building of cathedrals to the building of men, for God dwells in temples not made by hands. Wherever therefore man was oppressed, wherever man was suffering, wherever man was enslaved, be that slavery industrial, social, mental or religious, wherever man was prevented by any cause from building himself up in God, there the Friend heard the voice of the Spirit calling him to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that were bound. This made him a reformer, and he went as one anointed of

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the Lord down into the arena of life to battle for the truth.

In the world in which he found himself, where social life was hollow and empty, where business dealings on the square were the exception, not the rule, and where politics spelled corruption, the Friend set himself the task of making wrongs right. He rejected every social custom that trod with thoughtless feet upon the sacred precincts of man's personality; he plumbed his business methods with the perpendicular ethics of the Sermon on the Mount; he maintained that what was morally wrong could not be politically right.

"He felt that wrong with wrong partakes,
That nothing stands alone,
That whoso gives the motive, makes
His brother's sin his own."

In a time when one war followed another in rapid succession, when fighting was the real business of strong men, when the nursing of hates and grudges was the prime occupation of governments, the Society of Friends denounced the whole program. For

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them the peace propaganda was never a question of good economics; it was a question of good religion; there could be no Christianity in fighting, because the Christ laid down laws of love, service and sacrifice, and placed a premium upon the sacredness of man's person.

When the first drop of human blood cried out to God from the ground the voice of the Almighty summoned the murderer to account in words that still echo and re-echo even above the din of European strife, "Where is thy brother?" The Society of Friends picked up that old question and trumpeted it to the world through the Gospel of the Christ. War, all war is wrong, because God is our Father and all men are brothers, and Jehovah God, the Father of our Lord Christ, calls men to account today, as then and ever since, for the shedding of fraternal blood. War is contrary to a Father's love and at variance with the spirit of the Christ, who never lifted a finger to injure a living thing, who taught that love

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was the principle of all true life, and who prayed for his murderers while they were crucifying him. Moreover, the imaginative conception of Jesus of Nazareth as captain of a company of soldiers, as general of an army going forth to kill their fellowmen, for whatever cause, or as commander of a battleship armed to destroy life and property, is a mental monstrosity too awful to even think. To think of him thus is to lose him as our Christ. The Friends have always borne a testimony against war, have refused to fight, and have been the prime movers in practically every effort for the peace of the world in the past two and a half centuries. They have sincerely attempted to follow in the footsteps of One, Jesus of Nazareth, who taught nothing but the principles of love and peace, and on one occasion told a disciple to put up his sword; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

Because of their loyalty to truth, and their rigid adherence to the literal practice of

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their moral and religious principles more than one thousand Friends were in prison at one time during the rule of Cromwell. Those inhuman pens called jails, foul to the point of pestilence, and breeding places of every namable vice were the habitations for months at a time of those Quakers who were sentenced to imprisonment, not because they had committed crime, but because they refused to comply with trifling demands made upon them, which they believed were unjust and contrary to the essentials of their faith. This silent endurance of persecution and suffering for truth's sake paved the way for the victorious issue of the battle for liberty of thought which was waged during the next half-century.

The Friend's high estimate of the sacredness of human life, coupled with what he had endured in the bitterest and most unjust persecution, made him a valiant champion in the effort to change the penal laws, and reform the horrible prison system. There were in England in 1760 more than two

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hundred capital offenses, and the treatment of prisoners in a nation, which for ten centuries had been Christian in name, would have been discreditable to the barbarism of Africa. The Friends have been largely instrumental in enacting laws more in keeping with the worth of man, and in inaugurating a humane treatment for the unfortunate inmates of prisons the world over. Men have never ceased to marvel at the prison reform work accomplished by Elizabeth Fry. But when we note the background for her work in the suffering of her own people, who in a previous century had endured so much, and the inspiration for her work in the basic principles of her faith, it is not to be wondered at that she with the love of Christ in her heart could fellowship with the inmates of Newgate Prison, where even the keepers dared not enter unarmed. It is not to be wondered at that she brought order out of chaos in that hellish place; nor are we surprised to find that in conference with the heads of her nation she advocated

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principles which in the Twentieth Century are recognized as basal to the modern reformatory program. All workers in this realm of social service see in Elizabeth Fry the guardian angel of the unfortunate law breaker, and the patron saint of prison reform.

As early as 1671 George Fox protested against slavery as a custom inherently evil. As early as 1688 the Friends of Germantown, Pa., held meetings to speak against the slavery system as established in this country, and to advise their members against the slave trade. In 1742 John Woolman began a crusade against it. In 1760 the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting made the holding of slaves a matter of Church discipline. Thus, sixteen years before the Declaration of Independence the Society of Friends in Pennsylvania had officially and actually eliminated slavery from their midst. This was more than a century before the Emancipation Proclamation. It is not surprising therefore to learn that in the

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period immediately preceding the Civil War practically all the Friends were abolitionists. And it was but a natural consequence that all the way from Mason and Dixon's line to the frontiers of Canada the homes of Quakers became the stations of the "Underground Railway," over which thousands of slaves found their way to freedom. In the Parliament of England it was this same love of freedom for all enslaved everywhere which raised the voice of the Quaker, John Bright, in favor of the North, at a time when, had it not been for his influence, England would have been openly allied with the Confederate States.

It was this atmosphere which gave birth to the poetic spirit of John G. Whittier; a spirit, which, finding utterance in the "Voices of Freedom," and in his other abolition activities, well nigh, if not quite, made him the hero of Emancipation. Another signed the Proclamation, but the part this man had in preparing the way for that act it is hard to over estimate.

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Quakerism is indigenous to American soil. It ought to flourish prolifically in this atmosphere of liberty. The Quaker's love of equality is an essential of American democracy. The spirit that denounced hat worship and human slavery is the spirit which framed the Declaration of Independence. It is not surprising therefore that in the present age, wherever the shackles of an industrial, social, mental, or religious slavery hamper the free activities of the human spirit, there the voice of the Friend is heard in protest; there he is seen working to free the imprisoned; there the Present Day Message of Quakerism is needed.

When the leaders of many religious sects devote so much time and energy to discussion and disputation regarding the nature of their forms and sacraments, and the method of their application, when denominational histories devote three quarters of their bulk to discussions about the place of the altar, the style of priestly robes, and the authority of this and that Church officer,

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one seems to hear the echo of a voice coming down through the centuries which said, "Ye tithe mint and anise and cummin." (Matt. 23: 23.) And he looks for a people, who in this age, as well as in the past, will live with a simple faith upon an immediate spiritual revelation, who will depend upon a divine leadership which guides them to a constantly deepening fellowship with God, who will need not in this great spiritual quest the unwarranted emphasis which is placed upon ceremony, form, sacrament, and Church authority, and who will esteem it a great joy to consecrate their lives to the establishment in the hearts of men and in all human relations of the great Christlike principles of love, service and sacrifice.

In the early days the Society of Friends caught the vision of a life like this. They endeavored, though the cost was heavy, to put the principles of Jesus into practice. History bears witness to the fact that their message has been silently leavening the

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whole lump of Christianity since the middle of the Seventeenth Century.

Primitive Christianity revived was a very real thing to the Quaker of those early years. It is no less real today. They attempted to take Jesus seriously, when hate not love, selfishness not service, were the guiding principles of life. The Quakerism of the present day must with equal seriousness preach and live that same message. We must lift every life and all of life to such a place of quiet above the uproar of the world's confusion, that all humanity shall be prepared to say,

“Where cross the crowded ways of life,
Where sound the cries of race and clan,
Above the noise of selfish strife,
We hear thy voice, O Son of Man.

.
O Master, from the mountain side,
Make haste to heal these hearts of pain;
Among these restless throngs abide,
O tread the city's streets again;

Till sons of men shall learn thy love,
And follow where thy feet have trod;
Till glorious from thy heaven above,
Shall come the City of our God.”

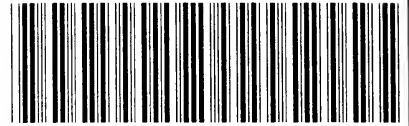
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